



ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGES AND CONTEMPORARY TRENDS INFLUENCING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study examined the challenges and contemporary patterns that must be taken into account when formulating a business education curriculum to ensure the long-term viability of business education. The study utilized a descriptive survey research design, with the population including business educators and curriculum specialists. The study was led by two aims of study, two research questions, and two null hypotheses. The study's research questions were addressed by utilizing mean and standard deviation, while the null hypotheses were assessed through t-test statistics at a significance level of 0.05. A total of 300 participants were selected for the study using a combination of random and selective sampling techniques. The data collection instrument utilized in this study was a questionnaire consisting of fourteen items, which was specifically prepared by the researcher. The instrument underwent face and content validation by three senior lecturers from the Department of Business Education at Tai-Solarin University of Education, located in Ijebu-Ode. The reliability coefficient of 0.75 was determined using test and retest methods. The study's findings indicate that several challenges, such as demographic changes, poverty, changes in government policy, emerging technologies, globalization, employment and unemployment, and human and material resources, should be taken into account when designing a business education curriculum. The null hypotheses of the investigation were upheld as the calculated T-value exceeded the critical value from the table. The discovery has confirmed the viewpoint held by numerous authors that the development of any curriculum for a sustainable future necessitates the consideration of various difficulties and contemporary trends. A recommendation has been made for stakeholders and curriculum developers in business education programmes to take into account various challenges and contemporary trends in curriculum development, such as digital diversity, personalized learning, and government expenditure on education. This is crucial for ensuring the long-term viability of business education.

Keywords: *Challenges and modern trends, Curriculum development, Business Education*

Introduction

The efficacy of an educational program is contingent upon the caliber of its curriculum. The rationale behind this is that the curriculum serves as a comprehensive framework that delineates the



educational content, experiential opportunities, and overarching objectives of the programme. The curriculum holds significant significance within educational programmes as it serves as a reflection of the programme's structure, encompassing many dimensions, purposes, objectives, and instructional methodologies necessary for facilitating knowledge acquisition (Ghulam, 2018). The significance of curriculum needed the timely attention to its development.

According to Alvior (2014), curriculum development is a deliberate, purposeful, ongoing, and systematic procedure aimed at generating beneficial and necessary enhancements within the educational system. In a similar vein, Nathani (2022) provides a definition for curriculum development, characterizing it as a systematic procedure that entails the design and enhancement of educational programmes delivered inside educational institutions such as schools, colleges, universities, and other learning establishments. This process encompasses various stages, including analysis, design, implementation, and evaluation. According to Camosun (2023), curriculum development encompasses a systematic and intentional process aimed at improving the overall quality and effectiveness of students' learning experiences. The authors posited that instructional design encompasses the creation and arrangement of educational activities that are specifically tailored to achieve desired learning objectives. Additionally, it entails the careful evaluation of these learning outcomes with the primary objective of improving the overall quality and effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. This suggests that the efficacy of a business education programme is contingent upon the formulation of its curriculum.

Business education plays a crucial role in fostering the economic and industrial prosperity of a nation. According to Adeagbo, Oluwafemi, and Okunlola (2023), the inclusion of Business Education in tertiary education programmes was a strategic measure aimed at addressing the prevailing issue of unemployment. According to Oduma (2020), the objective of this programme is to make a contribution towards national development by providing comprehensive training to individuals at an advanced level. The programme aims to equip recipients with the necessary physical and intellectual abilities, competencies, and knowledge that will enable them to become self-sufficient and valuable members of society. The feasibility of achieving this objective is contingent upon the process of curriculum development.

The Nigerian government and educational authorities recognize the significance of curriculum development in the advancement of education. Over the years, they have undertaken many curriculum development initiatives, including those in 1969, 1990, 2004, 2008, and 2013, among others. In addition, the establishment of regulatory bodies such as the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and the National University Commission (NUC) has been implemented to supervise the process of curriculum development in Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, technical institutions, and Universities. These regulatory bodies are responsible for establishing and enforcing minimum standards within their respective jurisdictions. The impact of their acts is experienced in certain regions, while in other regions it is not perceived, primarily due to the problems encountered during the process of curriculum creation.

Numerous scholars have conducted extensive research on the various obstacles encountered in the realm of developing a curriculum that effectively addresses the needs of business education. According to the findings of Hassan, Burhan, and Douglas (2017), the process of curriculum creation is currently encountering various obstacles, including but not limited to demographic shifts, alterations in policies, advancements in technology, the impact of globalization, as well as the complexities associated with refugee and immigration matters.

The demographic challenge arises from the growing number of students enrolling in business education programmes, surpassing the capacity of existing teaching and learning resources to adequately support their training. Additionally, the prevalence of poverty in society hinders students from accessing modern learning tools such as computer laptops and modems (Oluwafemi and Ewegbenro, 2021). The recurrent alterations in policy enacted by consecutive administrations in Nigeria have posed significant challenges to the advancement of curriculum development, resulting in the ineffective execution of produced curricula. This policy encompasses a variety of reforms, including modifications to teaching methodologies, adjustments to admission policies and criteria, alterations to examination formats, and revisions to standardized exams such as JAMB (UTME), SSCE (NECO & WAEC), among others. In the current era of education, where the success of schools and academic programmes is determined by standardized tests, it is crucial to prioritize the cultivation of students' creativity and utilization of technology to enhance essential skills and facilitate unique learning approaches (Alismail & McGuire, 2015). Consequently, this poses a significant challenge to the development of curriculum. Furthermore, the advent of modern technologies poses a significant challenge to the field of education and the process of curriculum building. Several studies conducted by Murphy (2015) and Oladeji (2020) have indicated that contemporary



students have a strong affinity for technology. Many individuals possess a strong affinity for video games and exhibit obsessive tendencies towards their smartphones, iPods, and various social media platforms, rendering them unable to function without these technological devices. The aforementioned academics have highlighted the significance of the evolution of educational technologies in reshaping the understanding of learning processes. This has led to heightened governmental expectations and a transition from teacher-centric to learner-centric instructional methodologies. The existing body of research indicates that certain school districts in developed nations have implemented "bring your own device" (BYOD) policies, which aim to enhance student involvement and decrease technology expenses for the districts. Consequently, a subset of high school students currently opt to carry their mobile devices to educational institutions, employing them for purposes such as communication, collaboration, and problem-solving, irrespective of their alignment with the prescribed curriculum (Daggett, 2014). It is noteworthy that Oluwafemi, Adeagbo, and Ojewale (2022) have noted a growing trend among business education professors, who are increasingly utilizing WhatsApp as a means to assign tasks to students, hence enhancing the learning process. However, a pressing concern arises regarding how curriculum creation can effectively accommodate this instructional strategy.

One further obstacle encountered in the realm of curriculum development pertains to the phenomenon of globalization. According to Kaegon and Nwikina (2016), there exists a mutually beneficial link between globalization and education, since both rely on each other for their continued growth, support, and advancement. Education is widely regarded as a driving force behind the process of globalization, since it enables nations to enhance their awareness and understanding of various aspects such as culture, economy, ideology, and general knowledge.

According to the perspective of Onyekwere, Okoringa, and Dike (2017), our current society is characterized by dynamism and globalization, with information and communication technology (ICT) serving as the primary driving force behind most of the observed transformations. The impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has permeated various domains of global systems, including the field of education. Hence, it is imperative to structure the curriculum of business education in alignment with global benchmarks. Globalization has significantly fueled the growing need for a worldwide workforce to meet the demands of the global labour market. In order to adequately address the needs of the labour market, it is imperative for business education training schools to possess the requisite resources that facilitate the production of proficient graduates.

In order to engage in a comprehensive examination of curriculum creation within the realm of business education, it is imperative to elucidate contemporary patterns and tendencies in the field of curriculum development. Mohammed (2023) has conducted an analysis of contemporary patterns in curriculum development, which will be expounded upon in the subsequent discussion.

One prominent tendency is the phenomenon of digital diversity, which may be attributed to the pervasive influence of information and communication technology (ICT) across several domains of human life and existence. The advent of technology has facilitated the simplification, convenience, and enhancement of numerous tasks. In order to thrive in the realm of business education, it is imperative for individuals to possess a comprehensive understanding and proficiency in the domain of technology. Due to its potential to foster national and economic development, business education must concurrently enhance the competencies of its recipients. Hence, the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is vital for the successful advancement of the curriculum within the programme. This suggests that it is imperative for curriculum developers to provide explicit instructions in relation to this matter. For instance, Teacher Tube is an exceedingly valuable platform for accessing educational materials. Khan Academy.org offers a wide range of educational resources, including high-quality videos, lectures, and additional materials, thereby facilitating meaningful, accessible, and efficient learning experiences.

Another emerging trend in the field of curriculum creation is the implementation of need-based curriculum, which has arisen in response to the growing emphasis on specialization. The implementation of a need-based curriculum is of paramount importance in the current educational system. The curriculum development adheres to the utility principle as it ensures that the learning materials and objectives are specifically designed to meet a particular need. Training institutes are thus advised to provide short-term programs tailored to specific needs. This can be achieved by incorporating courses such as certificate programmes in PowerPoint, spreadsheets, desktop publishing, software design, marketing, word processing, and entrepreneurship, among others.

The author additionally identified a modular curriculum that incorporates a credit-based system. The current trend in curriculum design allows for a significant degree of learning autonomy, particularly in open learning environments. This approach has initially been embraced by esteemed professional



organizations such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) and the Nigeria Teachers Institute (NTI) (Umoru and Oluwafemi, 2019). Consequently, it is imperative to acknowledge the merits of this system and proceed with the development of a curriculum that aligns with its principles. It is important to acknowledge that online platforms offer both need-based and choice-based curricula. For example, the online platform Course Era has implemented a variety of need-based courses that are available at no cost. Furthermore, the incorporation of 21st-century skills has emerged as a significant contemporary trend in the development of educational curricula. This suggests that it is imperative for the curricula of diverse courses to prioritize the development of 21st-century abilities, such as cooperation, critical thinking, effective communication, multitasking, stress management, empathy, artificial intelligence, and problem-solving, among others.

The identification of international understanding as a contemporary trend in curriculum development is attributed to the challenges posed by globalization. The phenomenon of globalization has effectively transformed the world into a globally interconnected community. This suggests that curriculum makers should prioritize a global perspective and promote international awareness within the curriculum. The constructivist approach to teaching and learning posits that learners should be afforded the autonomy to actively develop their own knowledge. The conventional practice of providing excessive assistance to students, commonly known as spoon feeding, has fallen out of favour in contemporary educational settings (Oluwafemi & Adeagbo, 2022). Consequently, it is imperative to refrain from employing this method, as research suggests that learners who actively engage in constructing their own knowledge have significantly enhanced learning outcomes. Constructivist tactics should be prioritized and integrated into all curricula. Hence, constructivism emerges as a significant contemporary paradigm in the realm of curriculum building. Antara (2023) asserts that several trends will significantly impact the trajectory of curriculum development. These trends encompass blended learning, personalized learning, gamification, collaborative learning, immersive learning, mobile-first learning, micro-learning, disability-accessible learning, social-emotional learning, and project-based learning.

There is a necessity to offer practical business education that will result in the successful acquisition of marketable skills required to attain significant economic influence, which is the objective of global powers and economies. The researcher aims to assess the obstacles and contemporary patterns that must be taken into account when formulating a business education curriculum for the enduring viability of business education.

Statement of the problem

Education serves specific functions in both the individual's life and the broader societal context. The prevailing issue of unemployment is well acknowledged, with a primary contributing factor being the lack of requisite skills among numerous potential candidates. Consequently, these individuals encounter difficulties in securing employment opportunities due to their inability to meet the employers' skill requirements. The issue described by Umoru (2021) has become a persistent problem in society, making it one of the most pressing macroeconomic challenges in Nigeria today. According to the national policy on education (FRN, 2013), it is emphasized that there is a requirement for a functional, relevant, and practical-oriented education system that enables individuals to acquire appropriate skills and develop competencies necessary for contributing to the nation's development. Okoro (2023) made a reference to this and also noted that skills in business education, such as word processing and desktop publishing, have been generally recognized as a promising means of attaining self-sufficiency in the contemporary economy. As the rate of population growth continues to exceed the rate of economic output, there is a corresponding increase in the number of individuals actively seeking employment opportunities. There is a recurring inquiry among stakeholders over the extent to which educational institutions are efficiently fulfilling societal demands. According to Oluwafemi and Adeagbo (2022), it is argued that education plays a significant role in offering resolutions to various challenges faced by humanity. This implies that it is imperative for the field of education and its practitioners to actively seek out viable resolutions to the various challenges faced by humanity. The achievement of this goal is contingent upon the implementation of a well-designed curriculum. Therefore, it is imperative to present empirical evidence regarding the obstacles and contemporary patterns that should be taken into account during the establishment of a business education curriculum, in order to ensure the long-term viability of the programme.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:



1. What are the challenges to be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education programmes?
2. What are the contemporary trends that should be considered while designing a business education curriculum to ensure the long-term sustainability of business education programmes?

Research Hypotheses

The following null were tested hypotheses of 0.05.

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant disparity in the average evaluations provided by business educators and curriculum experts with respect to the challenges that must be taken into account during the development of business education curriculum for the sustainable future of business education programmes.

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant disparity in the average ratings provided by male and female participants with respect to the contemporary factors that should be considered when designing a business education curriculum for the sustainable future of business education programs.

Methods

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The scope of this study encompasses business educators and curriculum specialists inside Colleges of Education in Oyo state, constituting the target population. The study employed a random sample technique to pick a total of three hundred (300) respondents in a proportional manner from the three senatorial districts in Oyo state. The researcher employed a meticulously crafted questionnaire as the exclusive tool for gathering data. The questionnaire was designed with a structured format utilizing a four-point Likert scale, consisting of the response options of strongly agreed (SA), agreed (A), disagreed (D), and severely disagreed (SD). The validation of the instrument was conducted by senior academics from the Department of Business Education at Tai Solarin University of Education in Ijebu-Ode. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) was employed to ascertain and derive a correlation coefficient of 0.78 for the instrument. The resulting value aligns with the perspective of Isyaku (2010), who posits that an instrument can be considered dependable when the correlation value approaches 1. The dependability of the instrument was assessed using the test-retest approach, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.83, indicating a high level of instrument reliability. The study's research questions were addressed using mean and standard deviation, and the null hypothesis was tested using a t-test at a significance level of 0.05. The established criterion for determining agreement was that any item with a mean score of 2.50 or higher would be classified as agreed, while any item with a mean score below 2.50 would be classified as disagreed. The hypothesis is rejected when the estimated t-value exceeds the crucial t-value, and accepted otherwise. The findings are displayed in a tabular format.

Results and discussion

Research Question 1: What are the challenges to be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education programme?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and standard deviation of responses on the challenges to be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education programme.

S/N	Items	Mean (X)	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1.	Demographic changes	3.46	0.78	Agreed
2.	Poverty and Policy changes.	3.56	0.76	Agreed
3.	Emerging technologies	3.80	0.82	Agreed
4.	Globalization	3.60	0.77	Agreed
5.	Employment and Unemployment challenges	3.48	0.78	Agreed
6.	Human and Material resources	3.60	0.84	Agreed
7.	Government spending on education	3.54	0.82	Agreed
Grand Mean			3.58	Agreed

Source : Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 above shows the analysis of responses of respondents the challenges to be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education programme. The result above shows that all the items had their mean ratings ranging from 3.46 to 3.80 which is greater than



2.50 indicating that the respondents are of the opinion that all the listed challenges must be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education programmes.

Research Question 2: What are the contemporary trends that should be considered while designing a business education curriculum to ensure the long-term sustainability of business education programmes?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and standard deviation of responses on the contemporary trends that should be considered while designing a business education curriculum to ensure the long-term sustainability of business education programmes

S/N	Items	Mean (X)	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1.	Digital Diversity	3.85	0.67	Agreed
2.	Need-based Curriculums	3.76	0.69	Agreed
3.	Modular Curriculum with credit base system	3.54	0.73	Agreed
4.	21st-century skills like critical thinking, communication, artificial intelligence, etc	3.60	0.68	Agreed
5.	International Understanding	3.25	0.72	Agreed
6.	Personalized and Collaborative learning.	3.10	0.71	Agreed
7.	Disability-Accessible, Social-emotional and Project-Based learning	3.44	0.76	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.51		Agreed

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2 above shows the analysis of responses of respondents on the contemporary trends that should be considered while designing a business education curriculum to ensure the long-term sustainability of business education programmes. The result above shows that all the items had their mean ratings ranging from 3.44 to 3.85 which is greater than 2.50 indicating that the respondents are of the opinion that all the listed modern trends must be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education programmes.

Hypotheses Testing

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business educators and curriculum experts regarding the challenges to be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education programme.

Table 3: Summary of t-test showing the different between mean ratings of business educators and curriculum experts regarding the challenges to be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education

Variables	N	S	X	DF	t-cal	t-value	Decision
Business Educators	138	0.72	3.67				
				298	1.65	1.78	NS
Curriculum Experts	162	0.74	3.49				

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Data in table 3 shows that t-cal of 1.65 at 298 degree of freedom with t-value of 1.78 is greater than the criterion value of 0.05 (t-value = 1.78 > 0.05). This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of business educators and curriculum experts regarding the challenges to be considered when developing business education curriculum for sustainable future of business education

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents regarding the contemporary trends that should be considered while designing a business education curriculum to ensure the long-term sustainability of business education programmes



Table 4: Summary of t-test showing the different between mean ratings of male and female respondents regarding the contemporary trends that should be considered while designing a business education curriculum to ensure the long-term sustainability of business education programmes

Variables	N	S	X	DF	t-cal value	t-	Decision
Male	168	0.67	3.44				
				298	1.55	1.78	NS
Female	132	0.68	3.62				

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Data in table 4 shows that t-cal of 1.55 at 298 degree of freedom with t-value of 1.78 is greater than the criterion value of 0.05 (t-value = 1.78>0.05). This means that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents regarding the contemporary trends that should be considered while designing a business education curriculum to ensure the long-term sustainability of business education programmes

Discussion of Findings

The results of the study's first research question, as presented in Table 1, demonstrate that several factors need to be taken into account when designing a curriculum for a sustainable future in business education. These factors include demographic changes, poverty and changes in government policy, emerging technologies, globalization, employment and unemployment challenges, human and material resources, and government spending on education. The results of the study corroborated the viewpoints expressed by Hassan, Burhan, and Douglas (2017) regarding the various obstacles encountered in curriculum development. These challenges encompass demographic shifts, alterations in policies, the emergence of new technologies, the impact of globalization, as well as issues related to refugees and immigration. The highest mean ratings are attributed to globalization and emerging technologies, which aligns with the findings of Oluwafemi, Adeagbo, and Ojewale (2022). These researchers noted that business education lecturers are increasingly utilizing WhatsApp as a means to assign tasks to students, thereby enhancing the learning process. This practice reflects the growing significance of technology and globalization in education, as they enable convenient access to learning opportunities.

The results of the second research question, as presented in Table 2, demonstrate that the participants hold the belief that various factors such as Digital Diversity, Need-based Curriculums, Modular Curriculum with credit base system, 21st-century skills (including critical thinking, communication, artificial intelligence, etc.), Personalized and Collaborative learning, International Understanding, Disability-Accessible, Social-emotional and Project-Based learning, will significantly impact the development of the curriculum in business education, thereby contributing to the sustainable future of business education programmes. These findings align with the perspectives of Mohammed (2023) and Antara (2023) regarding the influential factors in curriculum development for the future. The identified trends include digital diversity, need-based curriculum, modular curriculum, 21st century skills, blended mode of learning, personalized learning, gamification, collaborative learning, immersive learning, mobile-first learning, micro-learning, disability-accessible learning, social-emotional learning, and project-based learning. These trends are anticipated to have a significant impact on the trajectory of curriculum development moving forward. The results indicate that digital diversity exhibits the highest average rating, which aligns with the conclusions drawn by Oluwafemi and Ojewale (2021). These researchers highlighted the importance of skills such as mobile computing, cloud computing, social media, big data, Internet of Things (IoT), Web-design, and point of sale for business education graduates to effectively capitalize on entrepreneurial prospects facilitated by digitalization. Consequently, incorporating digital diversity into curriculum development becomes imperative.

The statistical analysis presented in tables 3 and 4 indicates that there is not a statistically significant disparity between the average evaluations provided by participants regarding the challenges and contemporary trends that should be taken into account when designing a business education curriculum for the long-term viability of business education.



Conclusion

The study has determined that curriculum development in business education is necessary in order for the programme to effectively address the demands of sustainability and functional education. This will enable the programme to equip its graduates with marketable skills that can lead to gainful employment, thereby contributing to the reduction of poverty and unemployment. The study highlights the presence of challenges and contemporary trends that necessitate careful consideration in the development of business education curriculum, with the ultimate goal of ensuring the sustainability of business education programmes in the future.

The efficacy of the programme is contingent upon the formulation of its curriculum. Hence, it is imperative for all relevant stakeholders and curriculum developers involved in business education to diligently address the challenges and contemporary trends in curriculum creation. This approach should be adopted across all educational levels to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the business education programmes.

Recommendations

The study's findings necessitate the following recommendations.

- When formulating business education curriculum for the sustainable future of business education, it is imperative for stakeholders and curriculum authors to take into account the problems posed by demographic shifts and regulatory changes.
- In formulating the curriculum for business education, it is imperative to consider the inclusion of provisions that account for changing technology, globalization, as well as the availability of human and material resources.
- The incorporation of digital diversity, worldwide awareness, and need-based curriculum should be integral components in the process of developing business education curricula.
- When designing business education curricula, it is imperative for curriculum developers to take into account the integration of 21st-century competencies, such as critical thinking, communication, and artificial intelligence.
- The integration of personalized and collaborative learning methodologies should be prioritized throughout the development of business education curricula.

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